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WARREN — JUST CLAIMS OF ITALY





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THE JUST CLAIMS OF ITALY

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THE QUESTION OF THE TRENTIN,
OF TRIESTE AND OF THE
ADRIATIC

(21 Maps and Diagrams)

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WHITNEY WARREN

AMERICAN CITIZEN, A. M. HON. HARVARD

MEMBRE DE L'INSTITUT DE FRANCE



AIRPORT LIAISON UNIT
23 JUNE 2014
YRABLU

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TO WHITNEY WARREN, AMERICAN CITIZEN, PARIS:

Sir,

I have read with the keenest interest your work "The Just Claims of Italy." You have dealt in a masterly manner with the questions of the Trentin, Trieste and the Adriatic. You have made it plain to your fellow citizens, who so chivalrously come to fight in the Crusade of Justice and Freedom for the Nations, on what eternal bases of nature and tradition rest our aspirations. With emotion I thank you in the name of all the Italians, who too often see their aspirations misrepresented and ignored; I thank you in the name of the combatants who suffer so heroically for the accomplishment of the national vow; above all I thank you in the name of the dead—the dead whose tombs you have seen, witnesses among the barren rocks of the Carso and the pines on the heights of Asiago; the dead who would have given their lives in vain if they had sacrificed them for an unjust cause, for an illusion of false domination, for empty words, for the ambition of a few men.

No, you have understood it and proclaimed it. Our cause is not the artificial creation of a political party, it is a living reality which has its root in the structure of the world and in the hearts of men. It forms an integral part of the new order of the moral world, this thing for which we really fight, for which we shall fight until victory. He who desires a lasting peace in Europe must desire Italian unity, complete and definite.

(Signed) LUIGI CADORNA.



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PREFACE

In the course of a trip which I have just taken in Italy I had the good fortune to meet Admiral Thaon di Revel, chief of the General Staff of the Italian Navy, and had several interesting conversations with him. Following up these conversations, in which we agreed upon the necessity of closer collaboration between the Allies and the interest there would be in making better known the national aspirations of all the peoples in arms against Germany and Austria, the Admiral wrote me a letter, the translation of which appears below. As a matter of fact, it is addressed through me to American citizens, but it struck me that it might be read with profit elsewhere than in my country. The name of the great sailor who has signed the letter, together with the general character of the ideas set forth, the paramount necessity for the Allies to have but one single aim, have incited me to publish this letter here. May it contribute to enlighten public opinion on the nature of Italian aspirations and lead it to recognize that the Trentin, Trieste, and the Adriatic belong to Italy on the same grounds that Alsace-Lorraine belongs to France.

WHITNEY WARREN,

American Citizen, Member of the Institute.

Dear Friend,—If in Italy one were to consult at random men of culture and generally well-informed as to the particular problems which concern the United States, the defence of its coasts, its national interests, its needs regarding its frontiers, few without doubt would be in a position to give a prompt and exact answer.

Among the great masses of Italian people such problems are completely ignored. It is therefore permitted

to suppose, without offending any susceptibility, that in the United States, the greater part of the nation is completely ignorant of the vital problems of the new Italy.

What meaning have the words Trentin, Trieste, Istria, Dalmatia, Adriatic, for the average American, outside of their geographical acceptance? Human science is so vast to-day that it is impossible to be acquainted with all *a priori*. But when an entire people rushes to arms, fights and dies in uttering these words, when it raises them to the height of a symbol, it is because besides their geographical signification they have a wider meaning and translate thoughts inseparable from the history, the existence, the spiritual and material aspirations of a whole race; it is because they express sentiments and facts which every thinking Italian owes it to himself to explain to his friends, to his allies, to every man with a conscience, so that they shall judge rightly of the acts, the pretensions, the hopes, and the incontestable rights of a people engaged in a gigantic struggle for the same ideals of humanity and justice which have led free America to take up arms. Trentin, Trieste, Istria, Dalmatia, Adriatic, five magical words, which for Italians in no matter what part of the world, justify the confidence on which the life and action of the new Italy are founded. Here is their meaning: "Italy after long years of bondage has been able to reunite the scattered pieces of her territory, by tearing them away, after long and bloody wars of independence, from foreign usurpers. But Italy is not yet completely united, and she can never be, neither can she feel secure as long as her gates remain open, as long as she has not brought back to their cradle her sons who are still under the foreign yoke."

We are one of the oldest races in the world; after having lived through the splendors of Rome we lived for centuries in servitude; we have learnt to suffer, but we have not learnt to bow ourselves down, and today we are fighting to complete our union, to get back again that which still belongs to us. If we do not obtain it, our very existence is doomed, and rather than submit we prefer to die. Trentin and Trieste are the doors to our home; they are the vestibule of our house, and at both Trentin

and Trieste a foreigner has taken possession, preventing us from closing these barriers. Even from the threshold of our property he sends armed individuals to rob and to impose his will. If we do not free our land now we shall never do so, and to live we shall have to humiliate ourselves. But this we will never do—we cannot do it. We shall fight on as long as there are Italians to fight; we shall continue to fight until we come into our own.

That is the meaning of Trentin and Trieste. Is it right that Italy should have risen up to deliver these two provinces? If the ports of the United States were in the hands of foreigners, if the districts of New York and San Francisco were occupied by Germans, would Americans have acted differently from Italians?

The land frontier of Italy is clearly constituted by the Alps; it is a great wall at the foot of which the peaceful and fertile plain of Lombardy-Venice stretches; but this frontier does not belong entirely to Italy; in this plain Austria holds places where she still exercises her tyranny on a free people of thirty-eight million inhabitants!

This situation must end if a future war is to be avoided, and if the doctrine of Right and Liberty is to be recognized.

But it is not only by land that Italy has frontiers, the greater part of them by far are sea frontiers. That which is represented by Trentin and Trieste on land is represented by the Adriatic on the sea. Now Italy is a country which breathes and lives on the sea. Her two lungs are the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Adriatic. If you take away one lung from a man he will perhaps continue to exist, but all the same he will be phthisic; and so, if you take the Adriatic away from Italy she will die of phthisis.

It is only necessary to glance at the map to see that, without possessing Dalmatia and the Curzolari, the Adriatic will never be a sea upon which Italy will feel herself safe.

This affirmation is founded on historical, ethical, geographical, and military reasons; permit me to point them out.

The Adriatic is for Italy the great route to the East as the Tyrrhenian Sea is the route to the two Americas; it

is the great way on which the Venetians concentrated all their efforts and which brought them trade and riches. It is also the route by which Turkish hordes raided our coasts to pillage, to fill their harems, and to man their galleys. The necessity to defend itself on one hand and the necessity to exist on the other forced Venice to watch over her geographical confines and to assure for herself the possession of a sea where there is room only for one and not for two.

When Venice fell and the Austrians took possession of it they wanted to obtain a footing in the Adriatic and steal the heritage of Saint Mark. Italy had not as yet delivered herself from her long bondage, but her destiny was shaping itself; this heritage in the hands of usurpers formed an integral and indivisible part of the great Italian motherland too feeble to break her chains asunder. Austria, in extending herself towards the Adriatic, found everywhere traces of Italian culture, on the coasts and among the islands. Ancient monuments, as well as modern houses, churches of former days, modern churches, the language, the customs, the civilization, all is Latin, all that is found there is a living part of the Italian motherland. But little by little Austria, by persecution, by confiscation, replaced the Italians of the region by Germans or Croatsians from the interior. Our houses, our altars, our monuments, are today occupied in a great measure by foreigners, people of another language, of another civilization, of another religion, who do not realize what they have torn from us, who do not understand the language of our country nor of its ruins; they know only that they are settled there because this region represents the Empire on the Adriatic, the key to the riches and trade with the East. The Italians remaining in Dalmatia struggle still to save what remains of their country, and invoke her aid, but their voices become more and more feeble as their numbers decrease. Now is the moment to strike, as later it will be too late; our thousands-of-years-old Latin civilization will be abolished by these spoilers.

To these reasons must be added another of military order. Our Dreadnoughts are shut up in Tarento because we do not possess a harbor large or deep enough on the

Adriatic to hold a large squadron, whereas Austria exerts her Empire on the whole of the upper Adriatic from Pola; from Sebenico and Spalato on the middle Adriatic; from Cattaro on the lower Adriatic as far as Corfu; moreover, each channel, each isle, and especially the Curzolari, possesses excellent ports for a numerous and powerful fleet.

Thus Austria is mistress of the Adriatic in spite of the immense inferiority of her fleet as compared with that of Italy and her Allies, France and England; she can at any moment bring out her vessels from any point of this magnificent coast which she has stolen from us, and we have not a single port to harbor our ships of great tonnage.

I have spent my life on the sea, and now I have the honor to command all the mobilized naval forces of my country; I can therefore speak with a full knowledge of my subject, as in speaking I base my arguments not on theory but on experience.

Whereas the Italian coast from Otranto to Venice is entirely low-lying, without ports, without anchorages, exposed to the North wind, the Curzolari Isles and Dalmatia, I repeat, offer numerous and vast points of refuge, marvellous ports, and the possibility of navigating inside for shelter from the bad weather. No matter where an Austrian ship may be in the Adriatic she can always find refuge by steaming a few miles and reaching the numerous channels of the interior; no matter where an Italian ship may be in the Adriatic she can only take shelter either at Venice or Brindisi, our only natural naval ports. But Brindisi and Venice are 1,300 kilometres apart, and, moreover, are not practicable for large modern warships.

The Curzolari constitute, so to speak, a bridge between Dalmatia and Italy, and this bridge is entirely in the hands of the enemy, who can make use of it just whenever he pleases. He can choose his own moment to attack, he can choose the place of attack and withdraw before being pursued, because Venice and Brindisi are too far off for us to come up in time.

Moreover, in the high mountains of the Curzolari Isles each peak is an excellent signalling station from which the whole of the ocean may be swept; on the Italian side

the reverse is the case, as the view only extends a few miles.

It is for these reasons that the words Adriatic and Dalmatia evoke the following thought in all Italians of today: We cannot make use of this sea which bathes the half of our country, because our coast does not possess ports, and because all the advantages are on the opposite coast. Austria for many centuries had no Adriatic, yet she was prosperous and powerful because she is not a seafaring nation, but a nation essentially continental; we, on the contrary, by our geographical situation, are exclusively a maritime nation. We have never been able to live without the Adriatic, and today, as we are threatened with being deprived of it forever, and thus not be able to realize our national unity, therefore we will struggle to the death to keep it; to lose the Adriatic would mean for us poverty, decay, and exclusion forever from the world of strong nations.

Italy, therefore, does not demand new territorial conquests; she simply wants to enter into possession again of what belonged to her for centuries; she wants to get back what is indispensable for her existence, for her prosperity, for the defence of her race and her civilization. Take a map a century old; to whom did the territory belong which is now in Austria's possession? The conquest was effected by the Habsburgs, let them restore to Italy what they have taken away; if Italy does not recover her property, war between the two countries will always exist in a latent state; in a few years it will break out again, because Italy cannot live without that which is necessary for her existence; not to be able to live is death, but before dying Italy will sacrifice to the last of her sons.

To demonstrate afresh, if it be necessary, that Italy is not seeking new conquests in demanding that the Trentin and Trieste, Dalmatia, and the Curzadori Isles be given up, I have only to point to these facts:

If Italy had nourished any ideas of conquest she would not have hesitated at the beginning of this great war in joining her former Allies, and in profiting by the advantages which they offered her; but on the contrary she

had instantaneously a clear vision of her mission: namely, to deliver her own sons; to save Latin civilization.

She entered the war at the most unfavorable moment, when all pointed to a victory for the Central Powers, when Russia had been beaten and pushed back; she threw herself forward into the "melee" with magnificent confidence animated by an ideal of liberty and justice for all these peoples and above all for the Italian people. To all the promises that Germany held out—the vast Colonial Empire, riches, Corsica, the provinces of Nice and Savoy, which provinces, although having been the cradle of the Royal House, are today free and prosperous under a civilization similar to our own and governed by the democratic laws of a sister nation, and are consequently excluded forever from our aspirations—to all these promises, I repeat, Italy preferred the rocks of the Trent, the Carso, and the Curzolari Isles; we are not waging a war of conquest; we are struggling to turn out an intruder in our home, an intruder who implanted himself among us when we were still children; now we are grown-up, and at the price of our life we will have no more of this intruder.

The aspirations of Italy agree in all respects with the aims of America in this war, and consequently it is only just that they should find a deep echo among the people of the United States.

America can be in a certain manner the arbitrator between two civilizations; she may either kill Latin civilization by leaving the Adriatic in the hands of the Barbarians, or she may push back the Teuto-Croatian hordes, who are far from the confines which nature intended for them. I feel sure that your generous and intelligent race, cherishing above all liberty and justice, will not hesitate between the two.—Believe me, yours affectionately,

THAON DI REVEL.



MAP OF TERRITORY INVOLVED



Territory forming part of the Italian "Irredentism".

THE JUST CLAIMS OF ITALY.

The Questions of the Trentin, of Trieste and of the Adriatic.

PREAMBLE

We have arrived at a period of the war when it is necessary to attain what may be called a unity of souls among the Allies. Although the end of hostilities is not yet in view, it is fitting to turn one's thoughts to the time when, amid the roar of the cannon, discussion on peace conditions will be opened on all sides. As a matter of fact these discussions have already commenced, in a general sort of way, and the several Entente Governments have laid down the essential clauses of the future treaty. Each one of the great nations fighting against the Central Powers has stated in clear terms the conditions to be fulfilled before it will put aside its arms. But it is not enough that each people should be convinced of the justice of its own claims; each must take also into consideration the wishes of the other powers fighting loyally by its side. That is what I mean by unity of souls—unity of aspirations, absolute solidarity in the will to make the Teuton give back to each and every nation that of which he has despoiled it.

From this point of view I feel no hesitancy in speaking of peace. It appears to me that in the general interest of civilization one ought to speak of peace, if only to demonstrate, on every possible occasion, that the only basis of peace is complete reparation for violated rights. Concessions offered to any one of the Allied powers, concerning either itself or any one of its partners, are inadmissible. Firmness is the only thing that will deliver the world from German tyranny; and a firmness based not merely on reason, but on sentiment as well.

A complete understanding of the several problems to be solved is indispensable, so that at no moment, either in the secrecy of cabinet meetings or at the green table of the peace conference, shall diplomacy go against public opin-

ion. We have had in the past too many such conflicts; I need give but a single example, quoted from the history of Italy herself. In 1859, at the time of Villafranca, Napoleon signed with the Hapsburgs a protocol of peace which did not give to Italy the territories that had been promised her. Italian public opinion was outraged, and even France was considerably surprised. If, at these debates, public opinion had been able to bring forcibly forward its point of view—against which neither kings nor governments would have dared oppose their cold and impersonal politics—things would undoubtedly have been different; but it was not given the opportunity to do so. What I ask, then, of the Allied peoples today is a complete accord among themselves—an accord which will prevent those in authority from patching up an unsatisfactory and imperfect peace, an accord which will oblige the negotiators to consider the national causes, each and several, as one vast human ensemble.

Two objections will be raised against this proposition—first, an imaginary altruism; second, the clashing of interests, neither to be avoided nor ignored when it comes to a question of satisfying a dozen or so of partners. These objections, to me, do not appear insuperable. I believe that the generosity of the various peoples will do much to solve the several problems, and, as an American citizen, I believe that this very generosity of the peoples is capable of the greatest of disinterestedness.

America, for one, is not fighting for conquest. She has no territory to win back. She championed the cause of France because it appeared to her to be the cause of Right and Justice. She entered the war to help France get back Alsace-Lorraine. This seems to me a good example of altruism, and I have no reason to think that among the other peoples, who have a conscience and a regard for humanity, there exists a sense of altruism less developed than among the Americans. Comradeship in the field, the welding together of all forces, the amalgamation of blood, can only have developed among all the Allies those high affinities that lead to a complete sharing of sentiment and understanding.

As to the second point, I fully recognize the difficulties which may arise from the clashing of interests between peoples who live on the same planet. Lines on the map are indeed unstable things, prolific in possibilities of dispute; but I have little use for those folk who, in the attempt to satisfy everybody, in the end satisfy nobody. Ever since diplomats existed they have been trying to create a state of things which would assure universal and eternal peace; they are always striving for an equilibrium which will never be found. The greatest among them have without exception been incapable of seeing fifty years ahead. They surely by now ought to begin to have doubts as to their own cleverness and astuteness, to recognize that all their artifices cannot stay the hand of destiny. And so, as they are unable to regulate the future, why do they not get to work upon the burning problems of the present? To do this, let them merely take counsel with instinct and common sense, instead of trusting to their professional wiles. Instinct and common sense demand the overthrow of Germany and Austria—the two conspirators. It would seem therefore that the right way to deal out rewards after victory is indisputably to satisfy those powers which are capable of holding in check any one of the Central malefactors; and in the front rank of these powers certainly stands Italy.

I will pause here a moment to address myself to my friends in France. For several months I have been publishing much on the merits of Italy in this war, on the magnificence of her effort, on the loyalty of her attitude. It must not be concluded from this that, after being one of the most fervent admirers of France, I have suddenly transferred my affections. I do not know of any country that could replace France in one's heart. My faithfulness to France, on the contrary, compels me to laud the qualities of a people who, in 1914, saved France from the greatest of dangers, perhaps even from death itself. It is not sufficiently recognized that without the neutrality of Italy the battle of the Marne would have been lost. Let us not forget the inestimable value of the service Italy then rendered in liberating, for service elsewhere, the

French troops employed in guarding the Gallie side of the Alps. Moreover, Italy's attitude prevented, at this moment, the Austrians from withdrawing their garrisons from their southern frontier. Again, later, Italy created a new battle front, from Switzerland to the Adriatic. For these reasons France owes a debt of lasting gratitude to Italy.

There are other reasons, too, of more ancient date, which ought to tend towards the close union of the Roman Wolf and the Gallie Cock. Both are the products of Latin civilization, which, at the present moment, is struggling for survival as against the Germanic "Kultur." Therefore it is a question of assuring the triumph of the Latin spiritual life; and so how can it be otherwise than that these two nations should have the same sentiments, possessing as they do the same ideals which have so much benefited the world?

I have continually before me that the prime object of this war is to extirpate German influence, substituting for it customs and practices inspired by the Roman love of Right, Justice and Liberty. Every nation that exalts the life of nations as that of individuals has its origin in the Eternal City where the destiny of Western Europe was shaped, and where the beacon still burns to guide all humanity in the paths of progress. I have learned, in my travels, to love Italy; everywhere I have seen evidences of the beauty and the loftiness of her thoughts and deeds. And in France, too, more than anywhere else, I have found, under the intense nobility of ideas, under the perfection of the Arts, the traces of Italy's inspiration. Therefore, when I learned in 1915 that Italy had broken away from her unnatural alliance with Germany and Austria, and had come over to the side of her own race, to fight against the descendants of the Barbarians—I indeed rejoiced.

Since then I have seen Italy at work; I have been permitted to witness the great labor which she is accomplishing, and to note what enthusiasm she displays in the task of vanquishing the common enemy. I have mentioned elsewhere the great feat her army performed in invading

a country in which advance is everywhere difficult; I have told of the grandeur of the Italian soldiers, of their chiefs, of their king—always present at the hour of danger and of courage equalled only by his modesty. Today I am going to set forth in a clear manner and in the name of justice the legitimate claims of Italy and the national aims to which she aspires. I hope thus to instil in the hearts of the Allies a little of the fervor and the ardor with which the Italians themselves are animated against Austria; and above all I hope to warn them effectually against all undertakings calculated to mask, beneath the cloak of apparent equity, the game of the Viennese politicians.

I.

The Question of the Trentin.

If there is one region which undeniably belongs to Italy, by the rights of Nature and of History, that region is the Trentin.

On looking at the map it will be seen that no boundary can possibly exist between Austria and Italy other than the summits of the Alps. This frontier was the one that the ancient Romans assigned to their native soil. Cato and Cicero fix this boundary with a clearness equal to that with which Caesar indicates the Rhine as the limit of the Gauls. It was the Second Punic War that gave to Italy her natural boundaries; and Polybius states that these limits extend to the north as far as the mountains which dominate the depression of the Po. The Alps form a convex belt around the peninsula; they begin at Vintimille, take in Piedmont and Lombardy, and gradually slope down towards Friuli, Istria and Dalmatia.

By the Alps must be understood the principal chain, with its numerous ramifications. Its summits divide the watersheds; on the one side the rivers flow toward the Northern Seas and the Danube, on the other toward the Mediterranean and the Adriatic. The streams that empty into the Po or the Adriatic are the Tessin, the Adda, the

Oglio, the Mincio, the Adige, the Brenta, the Piave, the Tagliamento, the Isonzo; they form in Piedmont, Lombardy, Venice and Friuli so many longitudinal valleys. To the west of the Po, on the other side of the Alps, the rivers flow toward the Rhone and the French Mediterranean; and again, to the east of the Isonzo, beyond the Car-



MAP OF THE TRENTIN

The black line at the top of the squares, indicates the line of division of the watersheds.

nie barrier, the tributaries of the Danube have their sources. To the north of the central chain the confluent of the Rhine and the upper Danube rise.

There is, therefore, in a very clear manner, a watershed system draining toward the south, which should establish logically the limits of Italy. Then in the name of

what paradox should the upper Adige, the upper Oglio, the Isonzo, belong entirely to Austria, while all the other rivers mentioned above, save a small Swiss section of the Tessin, are Italian for the entire lengths of their courses? The natural mode of separation is so obvious that it would seem useless to argue! Yet in spite of this, all the basin of the Adige, for instance, from its source to the south of Ala, a distance of about two hundred kilometers, has been taken bodily out from the geographic entity of Italy!

The Italian peninsula is indeed traced on the map by such incontestable lines that M. Charles Errera, Professor of Geography at the University of Bologna, has written these irrefutable words: "Considering the rapid falling away of the terrestrial relief from the summits of the Alps and the Apenines to the valley of the Po, where all the valleys and waterways are so clearly outlined and reach to a common outlet, the natural frontiers of our territory are clearly defined by the high line of mountains separating this watershed from the waters that have their rise on the further side of the mountain range. * * * No other limit could possibly be assigned to Italy than that of the Alps; no other line in the Alps could possibly define the natural frontier of Italy, if it is not the line between our waters and the rivers which descend to other European seas."

Such is briefly the geographic point of view—one which by itself does not suffice, perhaps, to define the limits of a state, but which becomes singularly important when contradicted neither by the ethnographical nor the historical nor the sentimental viewpoint.

Never, since the Roman epoch, has the Trentin ceased to be Italian. I may be excused for not going further back, for specialists in ethnography are themselves not sure what races inhabited this part of the globe prior to the coming of the Latins. One of them writes "The peopling of this country is a strange story." So I shall not pretend to unravel a mystery which the most competent savants have failed to solve. It is sufficient to bear in mind that the Trentin—the ancient Tredentum—

was the headquarters of the Romans during their campaigns against the Germanic hordes, and that from this time the Latinization of the country was complete. This was, and is, so deep, that "in southern Tyrol it has hardly altered after many centuries, and in the north Roman place-names abound today as far as the Swabian and Bavarian plateau."⁽¹⁾

Trent itself had the rank of city in the Roman Empire; its customs, its institutions, were all Roman; it became the center of a bishopric as soon as Christianity was solidly established in Rome. The subsequent invasions of the barbarians succeeded in leaving no stamp on life in South Tyrol; and the hate of the Teuton was thus firmly implanted in the Trentin before the Middle Ages. At this epoch Trent fortified herself, for about 1400 the Germans tried to get the upper hand by the methods which they still employ—first trickery, later force. For a short period they seem to have succeeded, while the outraged population manifested the greatest hostility toward them; but they were finally obliged to give up all real authority in the administration of the country.

Later the Germanic and Italian influences became rivals, with alternating degrees of success; at no time, however, were the Germans able to overcome the deeply rooted Italian sentiment, in spite of their system of organized immigration. The resistance was even so tenacious that toward the sixteenth century the Germans themselves began to speak Italian in this region; while from the eighteenth century the preponderance of the Italian element was such that the Emperors had to give way, trying to reconcile the population, no longer by violence, but by gentleness. Trent, Roveredo, Cavalese, Bolzano, the whole of the Tyrol situated to the south of Brixen, was treated as a province of which it was preferable to gain the sympathies by kind words, rather than to risk disaster by intimidation. This is a system which we have seen nowadays applied to Alsace-Lorraine; it had no better success in the former country than in the latter.

(1) Bertrand Auerbach: *Les races et les nationalités en Autriche Hongrie*.

Eventually Napoleon, feeling that Italy was entitled to have the Trentin included in the kingdom which he was creating, formed there the department of the Haut Adige. His work undone, the region reverted to Austrian rule; and since then the untiring claims of the inhabitants have resulted in numerous concessions. Of the events of the past century I may well let M. Auerbach, of the Faculty of Nancy, speak:

“In spite of these concessions, the separatist and autonomist ideas make themselves heard. In 1848 the Italians in the Tyrol published a declaration in which they claimed a new constitution, saying that since 1814 the two nationalities had been unable to live in harmony; their deputies did not appear in the Diet, and those who went to the Parliament at Frankfort protested against being treated, in the summons which called them there, as members of the Germanic Empire. In 1861 the provincial Assembly was but scantily attended, and those who were present raised the question of a political separation; the sessions that followed were very stormy and were not attended by the deputies of Italian origin, although the use of the two languages in speeches and lawsuits had been conceded. In 1866 the Germans accused the southern Tyroleans of longing for the lot of the Venetians and Lombards, who had been liberated and now formed part of united Italy.

“But if the Trentin remained in Austrian clutches, it was still an integral part of *Italia irredenta*, and has always been, even before the Italian nation was constituted, a spiritual province of Italy. In 1752, not to go further back, the *Accademia degli Aglati, Lontorum Academia*, was founded at Roveredo, center of the spiritual life of the province, profoundly Italian, with all eyes looking toward the peninsula. Girolamo Tardarotti, who died in 1761, devoted himself to the study of the Tuscan lyric poetry. The poet Clementino Vanetti (1745-1795) was a member of the *Accademnia della Crusca*, Florence, and collaborated in the writing of a dictionary for this learned society. Guiseppe Maffei de Cles, uncle of the poet André Maffei, wrote a history of Italian literature.

Giuseppe Sicler, of Corredo on the Nonsberg, wrote an essay on Italian dramatic literature. The eminent philosopher Antonio Rosmini, born at Roveredo in 1797 and died in 1855, published his famous work, *Nuovo saggio sull'origine dell'idee*, in Rome. A number of savants from the Italian Tyrol have lived and taught in Italy; Filippo Serafini of Preore, Professor of Law at Pisa; Giovanni Canestrini of Revo on the Nonsberg, Professor of Zoology at Padua; Malfatti, Professor of History at Milan and of Geography at Florence. The Poet Giovanni Prati, of Dasindo, a village in Giudicaria, who died in 1884, was a senator of the kingdom of Italy.

"This intimate connection between the Trentin and Italy is attested and symbolized in the inscription '*All Padre*' written on the pedestal of the Dante statue which stands proudly in the station square at Trent. The tie seems indissoluble."

It will be observed that my author is not Italian, but French, and that these words were written before the war. A native of Lorraine, M. Auerbach appreciates perhaps more than another the justice of such claims. I should like to see this appreciation shared, so far as the Trentin is concerned, by the entire public, and from the bottom of their hearts. Between the Oglio and the Piave 400,000 Italians are still under the foreign yoke—400,000 Italians whom Austria is determined to keep hers, and who are themselves more than ever resolved to become one with the mother country. The history of the years preceding the war but goes to prove to what extent they refused, after centuries of struggle, to admit the dominance of the Austrian.

The opposition between the Trentin and its Austrian masters has never been more bitter than during the last twenty years. Bitterly have the Italians of the Trentin demanded administrative separation from the German Tyrol. But Austria has always evaded the question; and in token of protest the deputies of the Trentin have not appeared at the Diet of the Empire since 1891. The students wanted an Italian University; they were finally given one—but in a small town where it had not the

slightest chance of being frequented. The protests were so vigorous that the University was moved—this time into true German territory at Innsbruck, where the Germans pillaged it and the lectures were disorderly. Nor is this wandering University yet settled; it remains a striking example of the spirit of the Italian youth, of the incessant conflict between the Latin and the German temperaments, of the shifty, hypocritical attitude of the Austrian Government, daring neither to refuse what is asked nor to accord it, grasping at futile temporary solutions, incapable of overcoming a people who detest it, equally incapable of granting them their just rights. The Trentin stands as a province that has never ceased, during centuries, to revolt against its rulers.

And this is the territory which the Hapsburgs claim as a hereditary possession! Why, then, have they so persistently clung to such a perpetual element of discord in their Empire? Is it for reasons of pride—the obstinacy of tyrants who will not yield to the unyielding? Yes, undoubtedly; but also and above all, for military reasons. The frontier of Italy was traced—here as elsewhere—so that Austria might always be able, at will, to invade Lombardy and Venice.

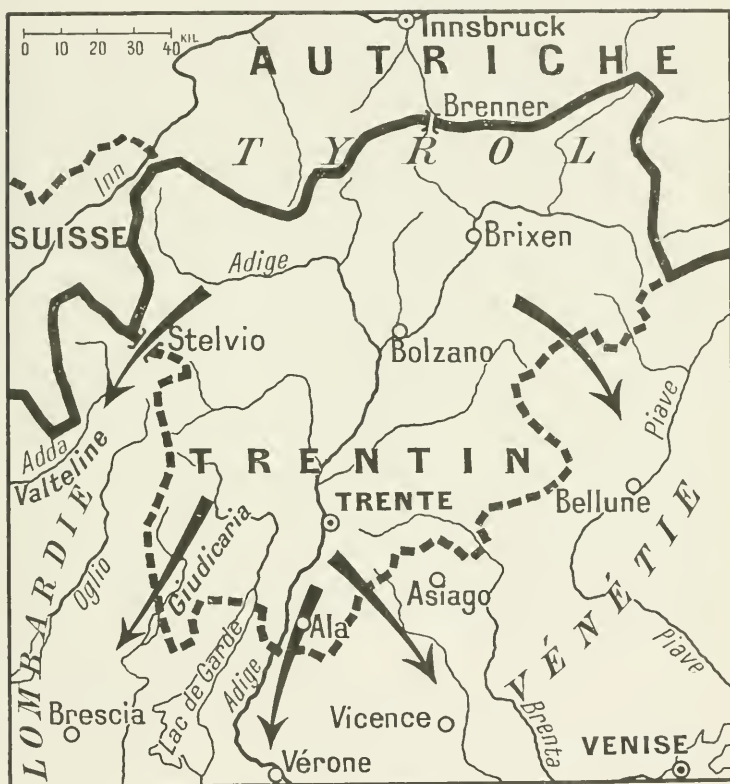
“Whereas on the side of the Adige basin a frontier extending up to the line of separation of the waterways would leave only three or four doors accessible to foreign invasion, the great Austrian triangle which penetrates to the heart of northern Italy, threatening at a distance of but twenty or thirty kilometers the Venetian and Lombard plains, opens upon Italy thirty doors, either by the great routes of commerce, or by narrower and less frequented passages. And these doors are those which give, in an offensive, all the advantage to Austria and none to us; because *Austria in every valley holds the highest and strongest positions, while we have only the lowest parts, the most exposed, the most difficult to defend.* Austria is in a position to descend directly upon such widely separated regions as Valteline, the valleys of Brescia, Verona, Vicenza, Belluno; Italy, on the other hand, whether for offense or defense, is forced to gather her forces by many

divergent and separate routes. Near the plain of Venice in particular, at the point where this plain narrows to a width of fifty kilometers between the foot of the heights and the borders of the lagoons, Austria can menace our country with effect. Italy, on the contrary, is so poor in natural defenses on this front that a 'coup de main' on the part of Austria would easily get possession of all the eastern part of Venetia, and so isolate our army, manœuvring in Friuli or the Julian Alps. And it must be added that the Austrian Government has even greatly increased the natural strength of this strategic position by construction of a magnificent system of military roads, extending right up to the most difficult places in the mountains, as well as by the establishment of great military buildings and fortifications of all kinds, scattered almost everywhere. It is thus that Austria has been able to create a solid base not only for defense against possible attack, but for an offensive long ago planned and prepared." (1)

The truth is too obvious to anyone who has ever visited this frontier before the Italian advance of 1915-1917. The Austrians were perched on all the heights, from which they could at their convenience have swooped down on the position left to the Italians. Nothing establishes more clearly Austria's resolve to declare war at her pleasure, when a favorable moment should arrive. Certainly this moment had not come in 1915, when the Empire had already a more than sufficient number of enemies on her hands. But Italy's decision to range herself on the side of the Entente, in spite of her complete strategic inferiority, emphasizes the courage of her resolution and the purity of the aims which urged her to action. Only the most imperious necessities could have forced her to engage in such an unequal combat—only the demands of conscience that she espouse the cause of right, in general, and of her own national right in particular; a physical necessity also to breathe, to attempt the impossible in order to preserve her own life. The con-

(1) *L'Italie et la guerre actuelle*, article by C. Errera.

stant deadly menace inherent in the frontier so wickedly fixed by the peace of Vienna in 1866 induced her to take up arms rather than remain at the mercy of an Austrian caprice. Rather risk defeat than continue exposure to



MILITARY MAP OF THE TRENTIN

The arrows indicates the directions in which Italy can be invaded.

becoming, sooner or later, the plaything of the Hapsburgs' fancy.

No one has less patience than I with what are called "preventive" wars—wars undertaken merely to bring about some adjustment of the "balance of power," to correct a condition supposed to be slightly disadvantageous to one nation or advantageous to another. But here

we have no question of behavior like Germany's—a nation pretending, with the aim of conquest, that she sits beneath the sword of Damocles, and seeking to justify, by lying excuses, the use of the arms which she longs to take up for her own unclean advantage. Italy was not ready. She entered the struggle at a moment when nothing indicated the near victory of the Allies. But she had no use for Savoy, for Nice, for Corsica, which the Germans promised her in return for her aid; it is not on that side of her frontier that Italy's future existence depends, but on the side of the Alps and the Adriatic. The whole country knew very well that the vital point was the Trentin. Therefore the people did not hesitate to take up the fight against Austria. Preventive war? No! It offers no such scandalous features as premeditation and prevision of imaginary danger. The danger was there, staring; the Italians had only to lift their eyes to the Alps to see it. They had only to turn toward Adamello and Lake Garda and Asiago, where, on three sides, Austria dominates the Latin plain. There was no security possible as long as these three sides were not brought down to one, as long as the triangle was not straightened into a single line. Italy's war is first of all a defensive war against an obvious menace and an intolerable injustice.

Napoleon wrote in his memoirs: "Italy is bounded by the Alps and the sea; her natural limits are defined with as much precision as though she were an island." The fact that the Trentin has remained under Austrian domination, in spite of the struggles of its population to escape the yoke, is one of the most striking challenges ever flung by force into the face of the rights of nature and sentiment. It is one of the most daring political abuses that history has chronicled. I have no hesitation in asserting that nowhere can be found a more striking example of injustice. The difficulties with which Italy had to contend before achieving her unity, the internal quarrels which divided her for so long, alone can explain the duration of this challenge to the elementary rules of geographical equity and human liberty. The deputy from the Trentin, Cesar Battisti, a martyr of this war, mag-

nificently set forth in a speech before the Vienna parliament the indefeasible claims of his little country.

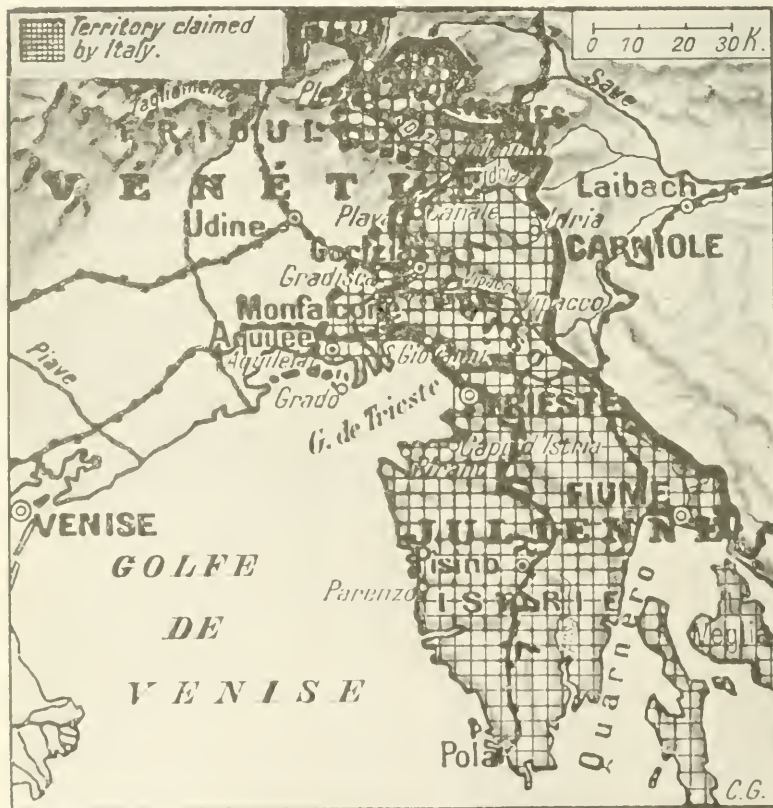
The Trentin is Italian by every reason which could decide the nationality of a country; not one is missing. The region is manifestly the complement of the Italian peninsula; the language spoken there is Italian; the races which people it have been Romanized for the past two thousand years. Will it be urged that the weak point of this demonstration inheres in the historical fact that, except under the reign of Napoleon, the region has never, politically, formed a part of modern Italy? What better argument, on the contrary, could be found in favor of the Italian cause? Here is a province which, in spite of history, in spite of habit, in spite of centuries calculated to wear down the fine edge of its sentiment, in spite of the thousand years passed under Austrian domination, has never consented to accept this domination—has even, in the eighteenth century, managed to obtain its independence for a time, under the government of its Bishop.

Today, when the unity of the kingdom of Italy is an accomplished fact, it is monstrous to see excluded from it a people possessing every right to be admitted, a people constantly clamoring for these rights. The day, not far distant, when these claims are satisfied, will prove that fidelity is not in vain.

II.

The Question of Gorizia, Friuli and Istria.

Toward the east, as we have said, the Isonzo is the last of the rivers issuing from the mountains that hem in Italy and define her natural limits. It rises in the Julian Alps, flows parallel to the pre-war Italo-Austrian frontier



JULIAN VENETIA

and at a distance therefrom of ten kilometers, more or less, and empties into the Gulf of Trieste. It receives, along its left bank, two tributaries whose sources logically determine the eastern bounds of northern Italy. These

are the Idria and the Vipacco; they rise about fifty kilometers from the old frontier. There is therefore a strip of fifty kilometers here, part of which the Italians reconquered and have recently lost again, and which, geographically, belongs logically to their territories. Here again it is the dividing line of the waters which traces the proper border of Italy. To rectify the frontier up to the Isonzo only—as it appears that Austria was ready to do in return for Italy's neutrality—is not in the least just. It is obvious that the extreme limit of the streams comprising the southern system of the Alps watershed is found at the spot where the Idria and the Vipacco rise.

The territory lying between the old frontier and the sources of these two tributaries of the Isonzo includes,



THE GORIZIA REGION AND THE ITALIAN FRONT BEFORE THE EVENTS OF THE END OF OCTOBER.

among other items, the plateau of the Carso and the towns or villages of Tolmino, Canale, Gorizia, Gradisca, Monfalcone, Aquileia, Grado, and San Giovanni. The historical rights of Italy to claim these places have been variously established.

Gorizia, with the region about it, was, in the middle ages, a small earldom surrounded by the domains of the

Patriarch of Aquileia. Aquileia itself, an old Italian colony which reached a magnificent development before the invasion of the Barbarians, was a town of much importance, the principal fortress along the northern boundary of Italy, the most flourishing port on the Adriatic, the capital, under Augustus, of the tenth Italian region of Venetia and Istria. Its origin is distinctly Roman. At the Christian epoch it was the seat of a famous Bishopric. Razed and fired by Attila, Aquileia was deserted by the greater part of its population, which took refuge, first at Grado and later at Venice; but the town remained of considerable importance in the Church politics of the time. Even in feudal times the Patriarchate of Aquileia, in spite of the rivalry of that at Grado, still constituted a powerful ecclesiastical domain. The German emperors tried to use it as an agency for spreading their influence; they loaded the Aquilegian church with gifts and privileges, and they installed there a whole series of German patriarchs. But even in the period from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries, when these patriarchs exercised alike the temporal and the spiritual powers, Aquileia never lost its fundamental Latin character. The basilica, built about the year 1000, furnishes architectural proof of this.

In 1420 the Republic of Venice took possession of the territories of the Aquileia church, and this was the end of the temporal power of the Patriarchs. But the latter had been and still were, suzerain of the earls of Gorizia, whose possessions accordingly reverted to the Patriarchate in the event of the extinction of their line. This actually happened in 1500; but the house of "Goritz" had signed with the Hapsburgs fraudulent contracts ceding its heritage to Austria, and thus robbing the church at Aquila of its fief. When Count Leonard, the last of the house, died, the Hapsburgs at once took possession. The Venetian Republic, possessing at the time, as we have seen, the feudal holdings of the Patriarchs, opposed by force of arms the legitimacy of this usurpation. But the republic was defeated, and in 1509 the Austrians settled in Aquileia, contrary to a pact previously executed at Worms. Such is the origin of what they please to call their "hereditary possession."

The fate of Gorizia was bound up with that of Aquileia. A town of exclusively Italian origin, whose Patriarchs had been declared Italian Princes by the Diet of Nurnberg in 1208, Gorizia was so wholly Italian that the Emperor Leopold wrote thence in 1660: "The country, the climate, and the fact that I hear only Italian spoken, all make me write in that language."⁽¹⁾ In 1732 the Emperor Charles VI was obliged to command the Imperial



THE MONFALCONE REGION AND THE ITALIAN FRONT BEFORE THE EVENTS OF THE END OF OCTOBER

Governors of Goritz, Gradisea and Trieste to prevent the people from mocking foreigners who spoke German.

Since 1500 Aquileia, like Gorizia, has remained under foreign rule. But the duration of an iniquity does not make it legitimate. Aquileia, the mother of Venice, is profoundly Italian; to realize this, one need only go there, look at its buildings and those of Grado, listen to the

(1) Les terres "irredentes" dans l'histoire de l'Italie; Pierre Sylvere

people. The only influences that have marked this corner of the upper Adriatic are those of Rome and Venice. By their architecture, new and old, by their customs, by their sentiment, by their language, Aquileia and Grado are as truly Italian as those two great cities themselves. As to the appearance of Gorizia before the ravages of the bombardment, it was equally Italian; despite four centuries of annexation, the Italian element remained preponderant.

The region of Monfalcone, from 1420 to 1797, was part of the Republic of Venice. Even after the Republic had lost, in 1500, that part of Friuli situated to the east of the Isonzo, Monfalcone still remained to her, isolated on the left bank of the river, amidst the Austrian possessions; and, to quote again from Leicht, "Her magistrates always energetically opposed the proposals that she be exchanged for the Austrian territories situated on the right bank." Such are the rights of Venice, and consequently of Italy, to this little town and its environs.

Before taking up the question of Istria, which, like Friuli, forms part of what is known as Julian Venetia, it is important to consider the serious military disadvantages, for Italy, of the old frontier on the right bank of the Isonzo. With Istria, indeed, we approach the maritime question; and we would better, first, definitely finish examining the problem ashore.

I will refer again to Errera. "The eastern frontier is formed in part by a broken mountainous line, or by streams which have sufficient width to rank as a military obstacle, and in part it is traced at random across a plain stripped of any barrier. Venetia, therefore, is opposed to outside attack by a breach of 40 kilometers, almost impossible to defend; whereas Austria on her side, just beyond the frontier, can easily defend the Isonzo, *protected everywhere by rocky ledges dominating our plains.*"

This contrast in strategic position is particularly striking on that portion of the front above Gorizia and on the Carso. The conquest by the Italians of Monte Sabotino, Monte Santo, Podgora, the rocky borders of the Carso plateau, required superhuman efforts, efforts which have excited the wonder of every competent critic. But

even at the points thus reached against every probability, the Italians were dominated by the Austrian positions. With the enemy standing on every highest summit the struggle was made a bitterly hard one for the Italians, and one demanding exceptional bravery on the part of these hardy attackers.

"One must consider," continues M. Errera, "with what ease Venetia, insufficiently protected almost everywhere by its frontier, could be invaded from all sides without our being able to dam the oncoming wave at any point on the flat plain, where is almost no natural obstacle. This danger seemed, several years ago, when we had no fortifications on the eastern frontier, sufficiently serious to lead even to the suggestion that, in case of war in this quarter, we evacuate the whole of Venetia without any resistance, and check the enemy at the passage of the Adige."

The French public, which knows the danger of an open frontier, will understand the pathos of these lines, and will need but to glance at France's own eastern border to appreciate that Italy only obeys "a sacred duty, a supreme necessity" when she insists on being better defended in the future against German rapacity. And while other nations perhaps cannot bring Italy's dilemma so well home as can the French, all can at least visualize, by aid of the rape of Belgium and the stricken fields of eastern France, what it means to be ever open to invasion by the Hun.

We have just seen that the Idria and the Vipacco trace clearly the confines of Italy in eastern Friuli. On the western side of the Julian Alps the Italian peninsula indisputably ends here. But where is the limit at the southern end of these Alps? They do not here gradually die away along the shore as do the French Maritime Alps; the horseshoe is not perfect. The Julian Alps, running eastward along the coast, are continued in the Dinaric Alps. Between the Julian Alps and the Adriatic, the Carso plateau spreads down from Gorizia toward Fiume. In this arid region there is no river to mark the division—no river except the Timavo, a short stream emptying into

but clearly, its lofty peaks. These facts sufficiently support the contention that the whole region between the Carso and the sea, between Gorizia and Fiume—that is to say, the peninsula of Istria—is geographically Italian.

Istria was Roman two hundred years before Christ. It was part of Venetia under Augustus. Afterwards it passed to the Barbarians, and then to the Byzantine Empire. Then it experienced various invasions before becoming semi-independent under the suzerainty of the Patriarchs of Aquileia. But the protection of the Venetian Republic against brigandage quickly became necessary, and since then the influence of Venice has been preponderant here, as elsewhere along the coast. As Auerbach puts it, "Venice, by her civilization and her arts, has implanted Italianism all along the eastern façade of the Adriatic."

The natural rights of Austria and of Germanism in Istria are non-existent. Venice, the heir of Aquileia, and more, the heir of Rome; Venice—that is to say, the kingdom of Italy—exercises on this soil quite incontestable pretensions against the monarchy of the Hapsburgs. But against the Slavs, what? This question may well be asked; for here we touch the sharp rivalries between Slavism and Latinism.

The Slavs first appeared in Istria toward the ninth century, that is to say, at a time when the Roman imprint had already been on the country for upward of a thousand years. They came from over the mountains and made but a brief stay, as for two centuries they were heard of no more in this part of the world. Later they began to filter in again, and were even encouraged by the Venetian Government, for malaria had to a great extent depopulated Istria and the immigration of these colonists of a new race was adjudged necessary for the proper development of agriculture. But the newcomers never succeeded in establishing a Slavic civilization; they increased in quantity only, not in quality, remaining peasants and doing nothing toward improving the life of the country. Industry, commerce and art were, as they

still are, in Italian hands. The Italian has, over the Slav, the prior claim to proprietorship and the advantage of having organized and then developed, in a continuous line, the whole of this territory. What is there more Italian than Campo, Istria, Pirano, Parenzo, from their very beginnings? Where are the traces of Slavism? Italy alone breathes here, the Italy of Rome and Venice. All the coast is Latin, peopled by a Latin race; the language spoken is Italian.

The truth of the matter is that the progress of Slavism in the interior since 1797, when Istria became an Austrian province for the first time—and above all since 1866—is the work of Austria, who has always warmly encouraged anything opposed to the Italian element. However, she has never succeeded in her designs, for one cannot, by decree or law, blot out a tradition that has existed for centuries. But she has spared no effort, and her intention of crushing Italian tendencies has been openly avowed by Austrian officials. Thus, in 1866, “the Governor of Istria declared unequivocally that reasons of state demanded the staunch support of the non-Italian element.” The numerical advantage of the Slav population, therefore, is due solely to official pressure, which has tended for the last hundred years to ruin all Italian influences on the Adriatic coastline. A similar policy was adopted in Alsace-Lorraine, where the Imperial German Government tried to stamp out native sentiment by favoring, even insisting upon, German immigration.

“Austria studied how best to reduce gradually the numerical and linguistic superiority of the original Italians; she endeavored to replace the Italian element by another which, little by little, should stamp its own character on the land, eliminating the principal causes of the patriotic leaning of the Italians toward Italy, and at the same time the aspirations of Italy to the annexation of these provinces. *These aspirations are based precisely on the great majority of Italians found in the country—at least, in Trentin and Julian Venetia—a majority*

which Austria has tried by every means first to overcome, afterwards to disguise." ⁽¹⁾

The attempt to overcome is shown by various trials, first of Germanization, then of Slavicization; the attempt at disguise stands revealed by the administrative methods employed in the Adriatic regions. Austria would not unite the country. "She divided what is known officially as 'The Littoral' into three parts. Of these, the smallest, Trieste and its territory, 95 square kilometers in extent, is the most difficult to govern. The second in size, Goritz and Gradisca, less than 3,000 square kilometers, is situated at the issues of the Julian Alps in Friuli and Venetia. The third, Istria, of about 5,000 square kilometers, demands, by reason of its position, incessant watching. The union of these three countries would have given preponderance at the outset to the Italian element. Out of 827,000 inhabitants nearly 360,000 claim Italian nationality, that is to say, 43 per cent. Nor can the numerical force of the Slavs, broken into 267,000 Slovenes and 171,000 Serbo-Croats, be considered as counterbalancing the Italian element. The Slavs are divided into two groups; and above all, the Italians possess an intellectual as well as an economic influence which would, once they found themselves in a united country with a single government, greatly inflame their consciousness of their political oneness." ⁽²⁾

This political cohesion has operated, in spite of the obstacles thrown in its way. We shall deal with it when examining the Trieste question. For the moment we limit ourselves to Istria. As early as 1866 the provincial Diet refused, almost unanimously, to be represented in the Diet at Vienna; and the municipal councils of Pirano, Parenzo and Capodistria were dissolved on the ground of their anti-Austrian activities. "The object of Austria was to show the world, at any cost, that the Italian element, compared with the Slav element, was in the minority." Had she succeeded in this, "the Italians would

(1) Leonardo Bianchi, *La lutte nationale dans les terres irredentes.*

(2) Auerbach, *loc. cit.*

have been left without means of justifying their aspirations." We shall see, in the following chapter, what measures Austria employed in this program, and how they were frustrated. If, from the historical point of view, the questions of Julian Venetia and of Trieste are not exactly similar, they nevertheless form part of the same political and moral problem, part of the same denationalization efforts by Austria and the same program of claims by



POPULATIONS OF THE LITTORAL.

Italy. It is, therefore, not logical to separate Trieste and Istria, in studying their national condition and their situation with respect to the Austrians and the Slavs. The economic problem, in this country, must be taken into consideration at the same time as the question of Fiume. As to the military problem, it is intimately associated with the military problem in the whole Adriatic; we shall accordingly deal with it after having treated the question of Dalmatia.

III

The Question of Trieste.

Trieste, for the Italians, is the symbol of "irredentism" in the Istrian peninsula. Geographically, Trieste and Istria are one; but from the fourteenth century his-



REGION OF TRIESTE

tory has led them in different paths. Until then they both were subject, first to Rome, then to Aquileia—the two cities to which one inevitably returns when seeking the

distant origins of Italicism in the Adriatic. The rival of Venice in the middle ages, Trieste fell for the first time into the power of that republic during the second half of the fourteenth century. She recovered her liberty and affiliated herself with the Church of Aquileia; but the Patriarchate, much weakened and sadly divided, could not keep her from the clutches of Austria's Duke (1382). We are usually told that Trieste "gave" herself to Austria; but the truth seems quite different. Trieste was already in the Duke's power when the act was drawn for handing the town over; so this could hardly be called a free gift. The constant appeals to the Patriarch at Aquileia, made by Trieste during the six months preceding this climax of her fate, clearly indicate that the town preferred autonomy under its old suzerain. Nor is it a surprising thing that Trieste did not wish, either, to belong to Venice; the two cities were keen commercial rivals, which, in the middle ages, was apt to imply a good deal of unfriendly feeling.

Regardless of this, it is certain that, with the rest of the heritage of Aquileia, Trieste should in any event have reverted to the Venetian Republic and not to the Hapsburgs. Trieste, an enemy sister, was none the less a sister. Genoa too was in precisely the same case; but she found her place naturally in the Italian unification, which has brought under the one scepter so many of the rival sisters, and has given them a place at the hearth in the great Italian homestead. It was as legitimate for Trieste as for Genoa to return to this hearthstone.

However, in 1382 Trieste fell under Austrian domination, while the rest of Istria passed into the hands of the Venetians. Trieste, indeed, succeeded in obtaining certain freedoms, an indication of its imperfect fusion with the Empire, until the Emperor Charles VI made it a free city in 1719. During the whole of this period, the city struggled constantly to preserve its Italian language and its Latin civilization. Then came the Napoleonic Wars and finally the Congress of Vienna, giving Trieste back to Austria in 1815.

The distinguishing fact of its history is that Trieste

has been under Austrian domination for more than five hundred years. The impatience with which it has borne its yoke is today full of meaning. Trieste, like the Trentino, furnishes proof of undying hostility to Germanization. Several examples of this hatred, all later than Italian unification, will not be out of place, as showing the state of mind of this population, excluded from the new kingdom. I quote from Bianchi.

“On the 14th of November, 1866, the inhabitants of Trieste, taking advantage of the presence of Victor Emmanuel at Udine, handed a flag draped with crêpe to the syndic of this town, with an appeal to the king to invoke the reunion of the Julian Venetia with Italy.

“In 1869 (14th August) the inhabitants of Trieste launched a proclamation to the Italians of the newly united kingdom to the effect that ‘they should have constantly before their eyes and in their hearts the cause of their brothers, deprived of the joys of freedom and of the privilege of pride in the rising destinies of the nation.’

“In March, 1877, the Trieste-Istrian Committee presented to Agostino Depretis an address in favor of the liberation of Julian Venetia. In June of the same year the chorus of ‘Hernani’ at the Rossetti Theater was made the occasion of a popular demonstration, pigeons carrying the Italian flag being released in the theater. The police interfered and made many arrests.

“When the death of Victor Emmanuel II became known in Trieste, the demonstration in favor of Italy was extraordinary. The communal Council adjourned, and the police were powerless to prevent universal mourning throughout the city. On the occasion of the visit of King Humbert I to Vienna in 1881, a warm appeal in favor of Julian Venetia was presented by the inhabitants of Trieste to Minister of Foreign Affairs Mancini.

“Again when Garibaldi died, the inhabitants of Trieste made a great mourning demonstration; and on the other hand they showed their aversion to Austria by refusing to take part in any of the Austrian national festivities.

“The first important monument to Verdi, a monument

which is one of the greatest concrete evidences of Italian sentiment in all Julian Venetia, was erected at Trieste by generous public subscriptions in 1901.”

These examples clearly show that from the day when Italian unity was an accomplished fact, Trieste has revolted against the idea that there is no place kept for her in the bosom of the mother country. She suffers, she is indignant; and Austria chastises her for her patriotism by unworthy reprisals—the burning of Italian news-



THE DIVERS ELEMENTS OF THE POPULATION OF TRIESTE

papers, the suppression of societies and even of governing bodies—seeking by every subterfuge to crowd into the background the real nationality of the city.

The census, moreover, proves indisputably that Trieste is Italian. The latest enumeration, that of 1910, gives 118,959 Italians, and 29,439 Italian citizens, against 11,856 Germans, 56,916 Slovenes and 2,403 Serbo-Croats. Even these figures are from an Austrian source, severely “revised”, and fail by a wide margin to correspond with

those given out by the municipality. The most significant feature is the increase in the number of Slovenes between 1900 and 1910; for whereas, during this whole period the whole Trieste population, including citizens of Italy resident in this city, increased by not more than 39,000 (from 151,000 to 190,000), the Slovenes and Serbo-Croats alone accounted for 34,640 of this increase (from 24,679 to 59,319). Nothing proves better the Austrian plan, which consists in implanting Slavs, of throwing them *en masse* upon Italian towns and country districts, so as to twist the ethnical truth and submerge the original inhabitants beneath a wave of shameless immigration. Slavism has become for Austria, especially since 1866, the great denationalizing instrument in the coast provinces, in Istria itself as well as in Trieste and Gorizia. She is not even content with drowning these lands in a foreign wave; she proposes even to force the Italians to give up their nationality and become themselves Slavs. I may permit Biachi to tell the story of the incidents of 1894.

“The Italian language, which up to 1866 had been that preferred, even by the immigrant Slavs and Slovenes themselves, is no longer to be the only official language. The order of the Vienna government was: on Italian soil, Slavic tongue! This was the first step. In Government offices public notices were posted in two languages—Italian and Slovene. Indignation was general; the Communal Council of Trieste and the provincial government of Istria protested; the whole of Istria rose in revolt, from Pirano to Albona; at Pirano the people tore down the notices. The government quelled the manifestations by force of arms. At the assembly in the Municipal Palace of Trieste, called by the first magistrate, and at the People’s Committee, the whole of Istria protested ‘against this new blow directed at the Italian sentiment of this region.’ ”

At the same time the Slavic schools began to receive the strongest moral and financial support from the Austrian Government, whereas the Italian schools were, so to speak, left to themselves—400,000 crowns being allowed

for the Slovene and German primary schools of Trieste and 450,000 crowns to the middle schools of these nationalities, against only 97,000 to the Italian schools. These repressive measures were completed by the action of the Slavic clergy, directly incited from Vienna, of which Bianchi writes as follows:

"Recognizing the futility of violence and abuse of authority on the part of its police, the Austrian Government enlisted the aid of the Slavic clergy. This body let slip no opportunity for participating in the oppression of the Italians and for glorifying, in contrast, its own race. It even went so far as to alter systematically the names of Italian families in the civil registers. The names thus changed became so numerous that the Diet of Istria voted a solemn protest under date of May 13th, 1899.

"The clergy even tried to wipe out all trace of Latinity from the Catholic rites in Julian Venetia. With this object, the Slovenian propaganda society endeavored to obtain, by means of a mission to Rome, a liturgical reform in keeping with their ends; but this the Vatican refused to grant.

"With the approval of the government, the number of Slavic priests was disproportionately increased; and they preached, and chanted the liturgy, in the Slovene tongue, provoking thereby energetic protests, such as that of the Diet of Trieste (1895) and of the Communal Council of Trieste to Leo XIII against the flagrant anti-Italian action of the clergy. But the Austrian Government actually prevented this last document from reaching Rome.

"The principal offices in public departments, in the church, and in the schools, were given to Slovenes or to Slavs from the northern and western parts of the Empire; race pride was exalted and incited, and violence by Slavs and Slovenes against Italians was encouraged."

Where do these Slovenes come from?—these intruders whose existence and interests must indeed not be despised, but whose extension and influence, relatively recent, must be restricted. They come from Carniola, from Styria,

from Carinthia. That is where they belong, with their center at Laibach, or, as they know it, Ljubljana. This territory which they have invaded and upon which they have spread toward the sea does not belong to them. That, shut in by the mountains, they should have been drawn to the coasts is but a natural economic law which we have no thought of denying. It is not at all a question of suppressing them or driving them out. But their political rights, here in this Italian coast-land, cannot be admitted. To admit them would be to encourage the spirit of conquest, which may manifest itself, not alone by force, but equally by slow and progressive immigration. The same remark applies to the Serbo-Croats, who came down from the Alps toward the Adriatic only around the twelfth century—one thousand years after the Italians—and who did not really get settled there until the fourteenth century. They are numerous in the interior of the peninsula, although not developed to any great extent along the coast. I repeat that it is not a question of suppressing them. It is merely that they must be prevented from exercising, in this wholly Roman country, an excessive political influence, and that their pretensions to do this must be suppressed—pretensions the more suspicious in that they have been supported for more than a century by Austria and Germany.

The Question of Fiume.

Fiume, at the threshold of the Balkans and surrounded by a country purely Italian, offers a striking example of Austria's exaggerated ambitions, and of the impossibility that the various elements which go to make up the Austro-Hungarian monarchy shall ever be able to justify their pretensions on the Adriatic.

Geographically Fiume forms part of Istria. On the



THE REGION OF FIUME

pretext that the tenth Italian region, under Augustus, ended at the Arsa, a small river emptying into the sea on the western shores of the Gulf of Quarnero, it was alleged that here was the natural limit of Istria, and that thus Fiume belonged to Croatia. But the line of the Arsa formed a purely administrative frontier. Geographically Istria ends, on this side, where the Julian Alps end—beyond Fiume, somewhere in the vicinity of Portofino, opposite the isle of Veglia. ⁽¹⁾

(1) See Invernizzi, *Per l'italianità geografica del Quarnero*, *Revista d'Italia* (Rome), March 15th, 1915.

Fiume in recent times, although enjoying autonomic privileges, was, up to 1776, incorporated with Istria. It is an old Roman town, Tarsatica, and contains Latin ruins. It was destroyed by Charlemagne and afterwards rebuilt under the name of San Vito al Fiume. It was later a fief of the Patriarchate of Aquileia, and finally went under the control of the Hapsburgs. It has never belonged to Venice—except for a single year—but it has always been within her sphere of influence; and in spite of having for



THE DIVERS ELEMENTS OF THE POPULATION OF FIUME

centuries belonged to Austria this town, like Trieste, has preserved its wholly Italian character.

In 1776 Maria Teresa handed Fiume over to Hungary, as a "separate territory annexed to the crown." Protests followed from the inhabitants, who apparently did not understand just what Hungary, eighty leagues away, had to do with their town. In 1848 the Croats took possession; in 1867 the town was restored to Hungary. Today it is governed by a "Provisional Statute." What

does this mean, if not that Austria is uncertain whether it belongs to Hungary or Croatia? "The status of Fiume," says Auerbach, "is undefinable at the present time. To whom does this property of several square kilometers belong? It is a burning question between Hungarians and Croats, each claiming historical rights to it. Croatian claims seem hopeless, as the Sabor of Zagreb never sees the two members for Rieka—the Slavic name for Fiume—who, by a law passed in 1388, should represent it. Meanwhile, those seeking justice carry their appeals to Buda-Pesth—a manifest proof of Hungarian jurisdiction, at least."

In spite of these wranglings, nothing has succeeded in obliterating the Italian character and appearance of Fiume. Neither the Slav invasions nor the double jurisdiction of Hungary and Croatia has affected it. A free town, although for the greater part of its history attached to the crown, Fiume has never had any real affinity for either of her claimants; like Trieste, she has ever struggled for her independence. The only desire of Fiume is to be part of Italy; and this is explainable alike by her origins, her position, and her population.

We have here a territory of 21 square kilometers, with a population, according to the census of 1910, of 26,000 Italians, 12,000 Slavs and 6,400 Magyars—without reckoning at all some 6,000 citizens of the kingdom of Italy. We have, then, a town which has been a prey of diverse influences, all hostile to Italy, and which yet counts 65 percent of Italians among its inhabitants. These statistics speak for themselves; they at once put in the right the author who signs himself "Italian Senator," and who says "It is, therefore, several thousands of Slavs who desire to impose their rule upon 26,000 Italians, who are quite as much natives of the country as are these Croats!"

A glance at these figures; at the origin of the city; at its constant struggle to remain independent under Austrian rule; at the number of volunteers, natives of Fiume, who are now fighting in the Italian armies—all this will explain why the Hapsburg has never been able

to decide whether the city is Hungarian or Croatian. It is neither; it is Italian!

V

The Economic Situation in the Upper Adriatic.

Venice, Trieste, Fiume—these are the three ports that symbolize the economic life of the Adriatic. Of these three, two are still Austrian. Could anyone possibly say that the geographical position of Austria-Hungary, its natural situation, make it a power with the right



MAP OF THE UPPER ADRIATIC

to commercial supremacy in the Latin Sea? Which nation, Austria-Hungary or Italy, is destined by its situation to be a great maritime power? Which one, in the past, was a nation of sailors? The reply frames itself: Italy!

It will be advanced, and justly, that the fact of being

landlocked necessitates, for Austria-Hungary, a search for issues to the sea. No one questions her right to exist; but between this right and that of ousting a people whose mission is to keep watch on the seas, whose life depends almost entirely upon the sea, there is a very wide difference.

On this globe there are species among nations as among beasts. The Austro-Hungarian species is terrestrial, so to speak, and the Italian, aquatic. Yet at present one could be excused for thinking the contrary; in the upper Adriatic, Austria, by the possession of Trieste and Fiume, is mistress of the waters.

The rôle of Italy, for centuries, has ever been to rule the overseas traffic between the East, the Center, and the West. This natural function is today disorganized, because one of her links has been, one may say, amputated. The present-day Italy is mutilated.

Venice, the great ancestor whose rights dominated the whole of the Adriatic, reigned over Istria; and if she possessed neither Trieste nor Fiume, at least she was able to compete with them. Nowadays, the contrary is the case. Austria-Hungary, mistress of the whole eastern coast-line of the Adriatic, paralyzes Venice. Trieste and Fiume, in spite of themselves, take revenge on the old mother city, to the great profit of the Germans and the Slavs. This revenge is unintentional; for the unity of the kingdom of Italy has destroyed the old rivalries, and the two ports which formerly were eager for autonomy now desire only to be attached again to the great body of which they are essential limbs. It is monstrous that in these enlightened times the 200,000 Italians of Trieste and Fiume should be separated from their brothers and serving the interests of foreign races.

As a matter of fact, Trieste contributes largely to the fortunes of Austria and Germany, and Fiume to those of Hungary. Now the normal division of European riches clearly indicates that Italy should benefit by the advantages of a coast which should belong to her. It is not a question of ousting Austria, Germany, or Hungary, nor of preventing them from engaging in trade; but it is not

their right to possess instruments of fortune in this region. Let every nation have its own share. Traffic here belongs to Italy; she should profit by the passage of merchandise to Central Europe. Italy is the natural intermediary by the very configuration of her territory; to Italy also belongs the right to dominate the trade of the Levant—her peninsula was created for this.

Gathered under the same scepter, Venice, Trieste and Fiume are destined, all three, to increase in importance, to assume proportions which the antagonism of the Hapsburgs has hitherto made impossible of realization. Even as there now at length exists a political unity of Italy, so there must exist an economic unity. Trieste and Fiume form part of the one as naturally as of the other.

“Admitted that Austria-Hungary has only the most artificial of rights to Trieste and Fiume,” say the partisans of natural laws—and we are one of these partisans—“what then of the Croatians? Can Fiume really be refused to them?” We leave the answer to “*Italicus Senator*,” already once quoted:

“The Croatians say ‘Fiume is indispensable to us; the Croatian coast to the south of the city has no bay to form a good port and to put the interior of the country in communication with the coast.’

“The Croatian coast, from the rock of San Marco, which marks the narrowest point of the Morlacca Channel, to Obrodazzo, near the Dalmatian frontier, has a length of 140 kilometers. At the widest part of this channel, about 50 kilometers south of Fiume, opposite Bescannova di Veglia, precisely where the shores of this island form a bay with the main coast behind them, is situated the town of Segna. Segna stands at the bottom of a bend in the coast and has the fundamentals of a good artificial port which would more than meet the demands of the Croatian shipping. It is true that Segna would never attain the importance of Fiume; but Croatia is a country of but a little more than two and a half million inhabitants, and cannot have pretensions out of all proportions to her real needs. In 1912 the exports and imports through the port of Fiume reached a total

of 3,882,183 tons, of which Croatia was responsible for only four percent. Is it reasonable for them, then, to claim Fiume as an absolute economic necessity?"

No; the Slavic covetousness is here out of all proportion. But it is nevertheless true that Croatia has a right to an opening on the sea. Italy does not dispute this right any more than she disputes Serbia's claim in the lower Adriatic. In other words, the economic question in the upper Adriatic may be summed up thus:

The defeat of the Austro-Germans means the taking of Trieste and Fiume; it means justice to the Croats by giving them a port on their own coast; it means the defeat of Germanism in all its forms; it means concessions to the Slavs in conformance with their real needs. In order that this defeat may be certain and these ends attained by those who are the just rulers of the Adriatic, the Italians on both its shores have joined hands in common purpose.

VI

The Question of Dalmatia.

Here we enter the domain in which Austria has had the most success in inciting the Slav element against the Italians, and in dangling imaginary rights before the Slavic eyes. And in the very first place we must ask what is the nature of that domain.

For some, Dalmatia belongs to the Adriatic, being part of "an indivisible geographic ensemble" whose limits are the Apenines, the Alps, and the Carso; that is to say, it appears to be included in the mountain and water system of Italy, and at a prehistoric period it may even have been a simple continuation of the plain of the Po. Others, and among them some Italians, think, as Errera puts it, "that the ancient manuals are altogether wrong in claiming that Dalmatia is geographically Italian, and that the geologic affinity of the two Adriatic shores is not sufficient to support this claim. But however this may be, it is certain that Dalmatia is separated from

the Balkans by the Dinaric Alps, so that it forms, all along the Adriatic, a narrow passage which the Slavs could not possibly claim as theirs. Here we have really a territorial transition between two peoples; and the truth seems to be that geographically the land belongs to neither of them.

Now among the facts to be considered when establishing the rights of a people to any land, the geographic situation is certainly an important one. Sometimes, as in the case of the Trentin, it is even conclusive; sometimes, on the other hand, it does not complete the evidence. In the latter event, when everything does not



MAP OF DALMATIA

seem incontestably to support a given claim, it becomes necessary to weigh judicially each point, and to decide on which side lie the most and the heaviest considerations.

But in such a case, what is the rule that determines the weight of an argument? Arguments drawn from nature, that is to say geographic and ethnographical arguments, are the heaviest. In the present case we have seen that the former offer no solution and only create doubt. It then behooves an impartial judge simply to

put them aside. As to the latter, drawn from the accepted or chosen civilization of a country, for those who believe in the supremacy of national spirit they will always provide the elements of a solution. But it must be ethnography and not ethnology that tells the story; a study of the traces that a civilization has left in the hearts and in the life of a people, not a mere survey of populations from the point of view of distribution and arithmetic. The only element that really counts is the aboriginal one, whatever may be its extent. If there were only one native Alsatian in all Alsace, he should take precedence over the thousands of imported Germans there in setting up ethnographic standards.

Next come the historical arguments, which often and often explain a situation without justifying it. Thus Trieste and Fiume have never belonged to Italy in modern times, but it is nevertheless true, by virtue of the influence exerted there by Rome and Venice, that they are both manifestly Italian. Alsace-Lorraine, now in German hands, offers a parallel case. It is impossible to draw conclusions from historical arguments when they are not in accord with the ethnographical facts from which springs the spirit of the original inhabitants—witness Fiume, Hungarian or Croatian at the nod of the Austrian Emperor. But historical arguments become imposing indeed when they coincide with the phenomena of the intellectual, artistic and social life, with the ethics and the esthetics of a country.

Finally we have to consider the purely scientific arguments, the linguistic and anthropological signs, which may prove much under proper circumstances, but nothing at all if they are contradicted by other arguments more powerful. This classification is founded on the fact that Nature alone creates the law, determining the character of beings and of things by rejecting the artificial results of conquest and politics.

With all these considerations before me, I would bestow Dalmatia upon the descendants of the Illyrians, if there were any; but they are gone—from the time of the cave-dwellers they have disappeared, little by little.

Dalmatia's first nature is no more. Let us see, then, what her second nature is from the ethnographic viewpoint.

It is Roman, all and quite Roman. M. Auerbach writes, on this subject: "It took Octavius the fifteen years terminating with 12 A. D. to civilize them (the Illyrians). Prohibited from brigandage and cattle-stealing, many of these barbarians joined the legions, and thus became the agents of Romanization among their brothers who remained aloof. The Roman peace brought into these lands a security, an ease and a prosperity which they have scarcely experienced since that happy era. The mines attracted speculators and traders; the roads from the coast to the confines of Pannonia were filled with traffic. *All this Illyrian country became as though but an extension of Italy*; Latin, the language of government, commerce and army, spread rapidly, and even the present day Albania has traces of it."

Thus the Illyrian element was absorbed by the Latin from this moment. It is this latter element which alone has the right to speak through the mouths of its representatives. Four Roman Emperors were Dalmatian, among them Diocletian, who founded Spalato.

The Slav infiltration lasted until the seventh century. Then it was followed by the Slav invasion. Eventually the Dalmatian towns, Latin in heart and in civilization, implored the help of Venice. From 1409 to 1797 the province was Venetian continually—after having been intermittently so before; and it had never ceased to be a spiritual dependency of Rome. *Therefore it may be said that for eighteen hundred years Dalmatia was Italian.* Such is the history which Austria thought to obliterate in a hundred years of domination.

Everything on this coast recalls Italian life. "Two thousand years of uninterrupted Latinity have imprinted an indelible character on all the towns. Here are the streets recalling Venice—streets which, less than half a century before, echoed no accent that was not Venetian. Here are the superb squares where flowers still the marvelous art of our ancestors. Here are the arches surmounted by the winged lions of the Republic—the glori-

ous lions, marked, alas, by recent daily mutilations at the hands of the Barbarians. Here are Roman walls, Roman ruins—silent witnesses of bygone days of splendor. Here are domes, palaces, residences—all Italian, undeniably Italian. And from all this a cry seems to arise; it is like the voice of a great soul, outraged, demanding reparation—waiting.” ⁽¹⁾

I have visited all the towns on this coast—I know Italy; and I find at Zara, at Sebenico, at Ragusa, the same atmosphere as on the opposite shore at Ancona, in the Marches, in Umbria—a unique atmosphere, not to be confused with any other. It is this atmosphere which influenced St. Jerome; Fortunio of Sebenico, the first Italian grammarian; Elio Saraca, friend of Ariosto; Georgio Benigno, friend of Lorenzo the Magnificent; Baglivi, the great Italian physician of the seventeenth century; Seismit Doda, who was minister of the kingdom; Ugo Foscolo, the celebrated writer; Niccolo Tommaseo of Sebenico; and many others whose names are famous. It is this same atmosphere that surrounds the cathedral at Sebenico; the Chapel of St. Anastasia and the palace of Diocletian at Spalato; the Palace of the Rectors at Ragusa; the works of Georgio Orsini, architect and sculptor; those of the brothers Laurana; and numerous other monuments of Italian origin. Was not Zuciano Laurana master of Bramante?

“To the Italians belongs the glory of having held Dalmatia to western civilization. They have directed the intellectual education of the Dalmatian towns, sending there their professors freely; and the elite of the Dalmatian youth attend Italian universities, principally that of Padua. Dalmatia has furnished Italy with thinkers and savants. This intellectual solidarity remains intact.” I extract these lines from Auerbach’s book; and they have all the more value, since this author is not particularly inclined to consider Dalmatia as an Italian province.

And what can Austria-Hungary and the Slavs oppose to these ethnographical conclusions? Simply ethnology.

(1) *Italicus Senator, La question de l'Adriatique.*

Their statistics give the number of Italians as 20,000 out of 620,000 inhabitants, although Italian figures place the true number at 60,000. But in either event, this simply means that the Slavic wave has succeeded, in this geographic impassé, in this no-man's-land, in submerging, by quantity alone, the Italian element. It is merely the result of ill treatment and conquests. Whatever their number, the Italians in Dalmatia are the *original* proprietors of the land and they are lawfully the masters—if not by the primitive right of nature, which has not existed since the extinction of the Illyrian tribes two thousand years ago, then at least by the right of second nature.

Again Austria-Hungary, here as in Istria, has since 1866 consistently favored Slavism. The Dalmatian municipalities, Italian from time immemorial, passed into the hands of the Slavs. Zara alone resisted up to the outbreak of the war, when the monarchy took advantage of the situation to dissolve her municipal council. The number of Slavs in this region has tripled during the last fifty years; the Italian schools have been closed; any means of oppression has been good enough for the Hapsburgs. Zara and Spalato remained in spite of everything, unassailable ramparts of Italianism; everywhere else, owing to these machinations, the Italian element has been constrained to assimilate with the Slavic or to disappear utterly. In 1880, Bianchi tells us, out of eleven Dalmatian deputies at the Vienna Parliament, nine were Italians; at present there is not a single one.

We are witnessing in this country an unnatural transformation which threatens to kill Latin civilization—a civilization of which is born all we cherish. What citizen of an Allied country would refuse to this unfortunate branch of his race their revenge, or would willingly see Dalmatia in the hands of the Croats, who, from the Austro-Hungarian ranks, serve with so much ardor the interests of the German Kaiser?

VII

The Strategic Question in the Adriatic.

Aside from all the reasons which we have just set forth in favor of the return of Istria and Dalmatia to Italy, there is another, even more overwhelming and



THE ITALIAN AND DALMATIAN COASTS

natural—that of the necessities of national defense. I may beyond any doubt properly call this a natural reason; for it is derived from the very configuration of the Italian peninsula.

A glance at the map of the two shores of the Adriatic will clearly show the weak position of the Italians on their eastern coast; a weakness without remedy so long as they are menaced by a possible attack from the other side of the Adriatic. On the coast as inland, it is impossible to fortify by artificial means when the natural ones are lacking. Now if we examine the Italian coast line from Venice to Brindisi, we find it consistently flat and utterly unsuited for defense. Not a single shelter save at Ancona, and there but a bad one. The coast, from one end to the other, does not offer a single harbor to vessels, except at the two extremes of Venice and Brindisi.

Here we have ideal conditions for falling prey to an enemy, however unenterprising he may be, especially if he by contrast possesses a coast line just opposite, indented at a thousand points, bristling with lofty precipices, observatories and artillery positions, protected by a labyrinth of small islands which form at the edge of the sea a curtain of canals admirably calculated to hide a whole fleet and facilitate a war of ambush. From Trieste to the mouth of the Cattaro, there is not a single portion of the long coast line now held by Austria which is not suited for insidious attack and strong defense. There are Pola, the Gulf of Quarnero, the belt of islands extending from Veglia to Ragusa, and, behind them, the ports of Zara, Spalato, Cattaro, with Sebenico, the most formidable strategic harbor on the Adriatic.

The letter from Admiral Thaon di Revel, Chief of the Italian Navy, which we print as preface to this study, shows eloquently why it is impossible for Italy to live in peace so long as she is not absolute mistress of the two shores of the Adriatic. I will recall briefly what the Admiral says on this head—for no authority is better qualified to discuss the matter.

“From Pola Austria dominates the whole of the upper Adriatic, from Sebenico and Spalato the middle Adriatic, from Cattaro the lower Adriatic as far as Corfu. No matter where an Austrian vessel may be in the Adriatic, she can always find shelter by running a few miles; no matter where an Italian vessel may be in the Adriatic, she

can find shelter only at Venice or at Brindisi, our single two natural naval ports. But Brindisi and Venice are 1300 kilometers apart and are, moreover, unsuited for great modern vessels."

So the injustice of the land frontier is completed by that of the sea frontier. There is no liberty of action for the Italian fleet, no possibility of its movement to avoid or to surprise the enemy. The real key of the Adriatic is Cattaro, for this commands the Dalmatian archipelago, which commands Pola, which in turn commands Trieste; and this key is in the hands of the Austrians! By what right has Austria, whose destiny is on land, taken from Italy, essentially a seafaring nation, her maritime birth-right. The bare truth is that, *from a strategic point of view, there is not room for two powers in the Adriatic.*

The possessor of the eastern shore is master of the western. Ancient Rome knew this; and, in our own times, Talleyrand reaffirmed it.

As "Italicus Senator" says: "If Italy does not dominate the Adriatic, she is dominated by it." It is for the Entente to say whether one of its members, as the price of a spontaneous and voluntary loyalty, shall come out of this war free or enslaved, healthy or impotent. Without the whole of the Adriatic, Italy is nothing better than a sick slave.

VIII

The General European Interest of the Adriatic and the Jugo-Slav Questions.

What is the aim of the present war? This is a question which may well be asked, in view of the paradoxical attitude of a part of the Allied press concerning the Dalmatian question. It is perhaps as well to remind the civilized world that it is fighting to ruin Germanism in all its forms. Nobody will dispute that Austria, the "brilliant second," is the best and the most docile instrument of Germany. Logic therefore imperiously demands, after the signature of peace, the reconstruction of Europe on

a plan which will weaken the two conspiring empires, to the advantage of those states which, by their situation and their power, are capable of holding them constantly in check. Then Italy should tomorrow be mistress at all those points where Austria threatened her yesterday. It is not alone a question of gratitude toward a nation which, first by its neutrality and then by its direct action, saved the cause of the Entente; *it is above all a question of European interest.*

The only way to paralyze Germanism and to prevent the return of the menace of 1914 is to drive Germanism from the places where it was impudently installed in the hope of satisfying the more easily its desires for conquest. To chase Germanism from the Adriatic is as essential as to drive it back across the Rhine. To this the lovers of complications make answer: "Very well, we will indeed banish Austria from the Adriatic; but we will give it to the Jugo-Slavs, not to the Italians!" But who are these Jugo-Slav whom so many writers are championing in the name of the principle of nationality?

I have amused myself on more than one occasion by asking this question of well educated men, and getting their ideas as to the meaning of this compound term. One of my interlocutors—a teacher—answered that he did not quite know the meaning of the word, but thought it could be translated by "Young Slavs." I presume he trusted to the similarity between the (French) spelling "Yougo" and the English "young" or the German "jung." Another affirmed that they were Slavs of Semitic origin—Yougo, Judeo—the phonetic similarity perhaps excuses the confusion. I guarantee that not one person in five thousand knows that the term "Jugo-Slavs" means "Slavs of the South" (from *jug*, south). Nevertheless, in a general manner and particularly in Italy, the Allies have earned the reputation of having been won over to Jugo-Slavism.

If the program for which this word stands were to be carried out, it would be necessary to *create* a new state to include at least the Slovenes, the Croatians, and the Serbians. For obvious reasons I omit here the Bulgarians,

who also count, however, among the Slavs of the South. I purposely use the verb to *create*, since the Jugo-Slav state does not exist. We are to admit the rights of an imaginary nation, invented by Austria and reinvented in England and France and America by men of learning and complete sincerity, men who could not possibly be accused of *deliberately* playing Germany's game. There is nothing, however, less homogenous than the elements of which this new people would be made up; there is nothing less natural, less probable, than their cohesion. They hold together neither by unity nor by language nor by religion nor by history nor by customs; they have nothing whatever in common. The Serbo-Croatian and the Slovene are two languages, entirely different, even written with different alphabets, the former using the Latin and the latter the Cyrillic letters. Again, the Croats and the Slovenes are Catholics, whereas the Serbians are of the Greek Church.

Here is a solid foundation upon which to form a nation! Witness M. Auerbach: "Do the Jugo-Slavs aspire to a brotherly union in the lap of their Jugo-Slavia? For all their pretensions to be of the same race and language—although the Slovenes would experience no little difficulty in understanding their 'fellow citizens' from Croatia or Serbia—in spite of their claims to a common history in religion and literature, would they be able to forget their theological differences? Could they put aside the religious symbols which have for centuries filled their spiritual and moral life in the struggle of Christian against infidel, of papist against schismatic? Jugo-Slavia is condemned from the start to religious difficulties which, if the country were constituted on a parliamentary basis, would be kept alive by party politics."

Such is the monstrous state that a great number of politicians in the different countries of the Entente would oppose to Italy on the eastern shores of the Adriatic. Such is the imaginary nation to which they would entrust the responsibility of destroying Austrian influence. It is too certain that Austria would profit by the dissensions which would inevitably break out among Slovenes, Croats

and Serbians; that she would not be long in turning them to her own ends.

In fact, we have already pointed out, Jugo-Slavism is in its inception an Austrian idea. During the last few years, the monarchy of the Hapsburgs has been working toward a replacement of the Austro-Hungarian dualism by an Austro-Hungarian-Jugo-Slav trinity. Among other objects there was in view the absorption of Serbia and the injuring of Italy. Francis Joseph founded a Jugo-Slav academy at Zagreb, the capital of Croatia; Jugo-Slavism had an agency at Vienna, the *Sud-Slavische Korrespondenz*, paid by the Austrian foreign office; finally, the Jugo-Slav club, *Sudslaven Klub*, was presided over by a Croatian deputy, a straw man of the Archduke Ferdinand, murdered at Sarajevo. These facts are surely sufficiently suspicious to make the Entente think twice and think hard before supporting the Jugo-Slav program.

Among the Southern Slavs there is just one people which interests us—the Serbians, whom Austria thought to suppress and turn to herself by creating the Jugo-Slav nation; and the Italians are the first to render them justice, desirous of recognizing their bravery, their conscience, anxious to reward them for the very noble part which they have taken in the great European Crusade against Germanism. Serbia deserves the opening on the Adriatic which she demands, either at Ragusa or elsewhere. But to throw in her lot, under the pretext of a consanguinity of race purely theoretic, with the Croats, who before the war showed themselves the most willing aids of Austria, and who since have furnished her numerous and excellent soldiers—to make Serbia join hands with the Slovenes, who yesterday were fighting by words and today are fighting by arms against Latin civilization—this is a grave step indeed.

Those in France or in England or in America who do not hesitate to take this step, who allow themselves to be moved by Croatian and Slovene politicians and partisans, cannot be aware of the harm they are doing. Instead of upholding the pretensions of their friends, they propose to lend their aid to a plan conceived by the

enemies of the Entente. They choose to help the Croats who have ranged themselves willingly under the German banner, rather than the Italians who have rendered such immense services in the cause of right. Is this incomprehensible blindness—or is it perchance cleverness almost too subtle? Are we again face to face with one of those diplomatic combinations of which I spoke at the beginning of this study, having for its object to bring about a long peace in Europe, yet as ever containing the germs of error and catastrophe? If the war is to end without the Adriatic becoming Italian, if Europe leaves the Slavs to organize themselves politically in a country that does not belong to them, but which is on the contrary, full of Latin associations, then, at no distant date, there will be a fresh outbreak of hostilities, and we shall again see humanity in the throes of war.

The error is to believe in the existence of an Italian imperialism. We deny its existence categorically. We find nothing in Italy's claims which is not in strict accord with her rights. Imperialism begins with despotism. At the present moment it exists at Strassburg, Brussels, Warsaw, Belgrade, Bucharest, Sofia, Constantinople, Trent, Trieste, in Dalmatia, everywhere in Europe where possession is founded solely on conquest. There is but one imperialism, and it is Germanic. It must be crushed; and for that reason, I repeat, every power capable of barring its way should be favored.

Italy aspires to nothing beyond completing her unity. She wants to add nothing to her soil nor to her history that does not legitimately belong to her. She reclaims the heritage of Rome and that of Venice, and she has the right to reclaim them, because today she is a great nation capable of looking after her own. Slowly, through centuries, she has become conscious of her force and her grandeur. Now she has arrived at a point where she is able to continue her ancient destiny. Europe and America have not the right to interfere with Italy's expansion; they have only interest in encouraging it.

When a physician undertakes to cure a patient, he at once goes about making a thorough job of it. If he did

otherwise, his reputation were lost. Italy, to be healthy again, must get back her second lung, the Adriatic. It is the workings of nature, and nothing else, which impels Italy to fight for her breath; it should be realized that one false move can deprive her of it now. So we raise our voice once more against all those vaporings which would belittle her existence. We proclaim our distrust of those who would chop and change in order to bring about a healthy Europe, cured of her present maladies. Europe is a vast body and each limb has its place; Italy's place extends from the Tyrrhenian to the Dalmatian shores.

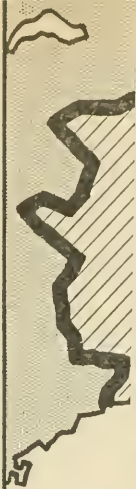
The Slav world and the Balkans begin on the other side of the Dinaric Alps. We deny the right of diplomats to indulge in experiments which, to say the least, would be unnatural and paradoxical. On the other hand, we have the fullest confidence in the judgment of the people. We ask the Allied peoples for their opinion as to whether Italy has not deserved, by her loyalty in the present imbroglio, to get back her lost provinces; we ask them whether, in the words of Louis Blanc, the moment has not arrived for men who are engaged in the same fight to adopt "the simplest and the noblest of all theories—that of fraternity."

We do not forget gallant Serbia, who, at the price of supreme sacrifice, will have magnificently collaborated in the common triumph. The accord reached between her and Italy has doubtless assured her of the future. It is equally far from our thoughts to injure the Slav cause, which, in a general way, has shown itself hostile to Germany. But to everyone his due; let us render first unto Caesar that which to Caesar is due.

WHITNEY WARREN,

POSTSCRIPT:—This study was finished at the moment of the Austro-German offensive which has temporarily retaken from the Italians the ground of the Carso, conquered under inconceivable difficulties during the preceding two and a half years. These happenings

only confirm me more than ever in my convictions of the necessity for a "unity of soul" among the Allies. That alone, today, can assure the unity of front necessary to victory, and, tomorrow, the unity of diplomacy equally essential for the doing away with German brute power, for the complete ruin of Germany's schemes.



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*Ground gained by the italians
(1) in 1915 (2) 1916 (3) 1917 from
the Austrians*

*The formation of the
Italian Unity (the da-
tes on which the prin-
cipalities were réuni-
ted to Italy)*

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